



February 2013

The Honorable Mark L. Pryor
Chairman
Senate Agricultural
Appropriations Subcommittee
Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., SD-129

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Senate Agricultural
Appropriations Subcommittee
Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., SD-190

James L. Henry, Chair
Transportation Institute

Lee A. Kincaid
American Maritime Congress

Paul Doell
American Maritime Officers

Brenda Otterson
American Maritime Officers Service

John A. DeCrosta
APL Ltd.

Eric P. Ebeling
American Roll-on Roll-off Carrier
LLC

John Tirpak
Foss International

Jared T. Henry
Hapag-Lloyd USA, LLC

William K. Terrill
Intermarine LLC

Philip J. Shapiro
Liberty Maritime Corporation

Clint Eisenhauer
Maersk Line Limited

Matt Dwyer
Marine Engineers' Beneficial
Association

C. James Patti
Maritime Institute for Research and
Industrial Development

Klaus Luhta
International Organization of
Masters, Mates & Pilots

Augustin Tellez
Seafarers International Union

Gunnar Lundeborg
Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Clifford Johnson
United Maritime Group

R. Christian Johnsen
Waterman Steamship Corporation

Dear Chairman Pryor and Ranking Member Blunt:

USA Maritime seeks sustainable funding for the PL 480 Food for Peace and Food for Progress programs and therefore strongly opposes proposals to cut deeply or eliminate program funding. Since FY 2008, Food for Peace funding has already been cut 35 percent.

Unlike other foreign aid programs, these time-tested programs do more than just send aid overseas. Food for Peace is a point of pride for the 44,000 American farmers, shippers, processors, port workers, and merchant mariners whose jobs depend upon the program. Food for Peace is not just a handout. It's the sharing of American bounty and American know-how to help rescue those less fortunate from starvation and chronic food insecurity. By creating a uniquely sustainable public-private partnership among American faith-based organizations and charities, US industry, and the US Government, Food for Peace leverages private and public resources to make a meaningful difference for millions of people in a way that Government alone or cash handouts simply cannot.

In 2011, General Duncan McNabb, as Commanding General of the US Transportation Command, stated that the availability of food aid cargoes is essential to maintaining the US Merchant Fleet, and therefore essential to maintaining our Nation's national defense sealift capability. We agree with General McNabb's military assessment that any decrease in food aid tonnage would lead to increased federal expenditures elsewhere in order to maintain that essential sealift capability.

Proposals to slash funding for food aid and the tonnage of food aid shipped, or to shift to purchases of food aid from foreign (sometimes called "local and regional") suppliers instead of American farmers will be harmful to our US Merchant Marine, harmful to our national defense sealift capability, and bad for our economy. USA Maritime strongly encourages Congress to sustain PL 480 Food for Peace and Food for Progress funding, ensuring that these programs continue to focus on the reliable export of safe and nutritious US-grown commodities to those in need overseas.

Sincerely,

James L. Henry
Chairman